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 SECURITY INFORMATION
 CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
 INFORMATION FROM
 FOREIGN DOCUMENTS OR RADIO BROADCASTS

REPORT

CD NO.

STAT

COUNTRY China

DATE OF
INFORMATION 1952

SUBJECT Economic - Agriculture, state farms

HOW
PUBLISHED Daily newspaper

DATE DIST. 26 Apr 1952

WHERE
PUBLISHED Peiping

NO. OF PAGES 4

DATE
PUBLISHED 3 Jan 1952

LANGUAGE Chinese

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

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SO'URCE Jen-min Jih-pao.CHINESE MECHANIZE STATE FARMS

Fifteen state farms operated by the Ministry of Agriculture in China have a combined area of 555,000 mou [One mou equals 1/6 acre] of which 165,000 mou were under cultivation in 1951. Total crop production in 1951 was the equivalent of 24,750,000 catties of rice [one catty equals 1 1/3 pounds]. By 1951, all operations from preparation and planting to harvesting had been mechanized. Employees number 4,200, 85 percent of whom are organized in labor unions.

To emulate the most modern Soviet agricultural practice is the goal of management, and scientific, business-like management practices are rapidly being adopted. Production per unit of area is being rapidly increased.

Problems still to be solved are soil improvement, weed control, and improvement of cadre thinking and practice.

State farms operated by the government of the People's Republic of China are socialistic enterprises, according to an article by Han Ch'ang-keng and Li Ch'un-kuei in the Peiping Jen-min Jih-pao. A summary of the article follows:

State Farms are operated on state-owned land and are highly mechanized. The Ministry of Agriculture is the agency charged with their operation. The employees, recognizing themselves as masters, work collectively with a high degree of awareness of their responsibility for the success of the enterprise.

The number of these state farms in China excluding Northeast is 15, distributed as follows: North China 10, East China 3, Central and South China one, and Northwest China one. The total area involved is 555,000 mou. In 1950, 161,000 mou were under cultivation producing crops having a value equivalent to 15 million catties of rice. In 1951, 165,000 mou under cultivation produced the equivalent of 24,750,000 catties of rice.

- 1 -

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All the farms are plentifully supplied with tractors and the most modern cultivating, seeding, and harvesting machinery, including combines. A total of 4,200 workers are employed. The farms are in sparsely settled areas and the land is wild or alkali. Only 10,000 mou of the 15 farms was formerly under cultivation.

The Lu-t'ai Farm in Hopeh Province, with a total area of 52,000 mou and an arable area of 44,400 mou (the remainder of the area being used for buildings, roads, canals, etc.), is the largest and best equipped. The whole farm is well irrigated.

The Lu-t'ai Farm was originally opened by the Japanese during their military occupation of the area. The KMT authorities permitted it to revert to a wild state. The Central People's Government began its revival in April 1949. August rains flooded the area. By the end of May 1950, the farm was ready for cultivation. At present, two large irrigation reservoirs have sufficient capacity to irrigate adequately the whole farm. Some 887 irrigation locks have been constructed, and 80 bridges have been built. In the construction of canals and roads 166,047 fang of earth was moved [one fang equals 100 cubic feet].

The Agricultural Machinery Training School near Peiping is the most progressive of all the farms. It has 2,100 mou of arable land. The Tung-hsin Farm in North Kiangsu is located on alkali land which had been wild for 100 years. It was covered with reeds. Some 16,000 mou have been prepared for cultivation.

All the farms included in this survey were put into shape for cultivation in about 2 years time. The amount of land under cultivation and producing is rising. The following comparative data for 1950 - 1951, for three important crops, show the progress being made.

<u>Crop</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Area</u> (mou)	<u>Production</u> <u>Per Mou</u> (catties)	<u>Percent</u> <u>Increase</u> <u>Per Mou</u>
Cotton (unginned)	1950	15,791	99.9	
Cotton (unginned)	1951	14,679	150.9	50.8
Paddy rice	1950	17,630	418.0	
Paddy rice	1951	19,946	470.0	12.4
Wheat	1950	22,492	49.5	
Wheat	1951	38,614	113.5	129.0

The total area planted in 1951 was 31.7 percent more than that for 1950, total production increased 58 percent, and average production per mou was up 38 percent.

The most important improvements have been the adoption of modern Soviet methods on some farms. During 1949 - 1950, the emphasis was on increasing the area under cultivation, but plowing was shallow, the maximum depth being 15 centimeters. In 1951, the depth was increased to 20 centimeters. The best improvement in methods, on Soviet advice, has been closer planting of cotton and dry sowing of paddy rice. The Chinese custom has been to plant cotton thinly, but Soviet experience has shown that close planting is sure to raise production.

- 2 -

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The Machinery Training School Farm, in 1949, planted 1,500 plants to the mou and had a production of 48 catties per mou of unginned cotton. In 1950, the number of plants was increased to 2,500 per mou on Soviet advice and to 3,600 in 1951, with increased use of fertilizer, extra cultivation, better pest control, and topping. In 1950, the yield was 163 catties unginned cotton per mou; and in 1951, 296 catties on 9/4 mou of ordinary nonirrigated land, with a yield of 537 catties per mou on 7 mou of especially good land. These yields exceeded the goal of an average of 250 catties per mou on average land and 500 catties on especially good land.

This method gives great promise of a large increase in National cotton production if it spreads to all state farms and from them among farmers in general.

The handling of machinery on these farms is showing marked improvement. In 1951, all operations from planting to harvesting were completely mechanized; 80-horsepower tractors drawing four seeders and using eight men to operate the machines can plant rice and wheat at a rate of 45 to 60 mou per hour, an operation 15 to 20 times as efficient as man-labor operations. A tractor drawing four Soviet or six American disk harrows with three men to operate the setup can harrow from 60-90 mou per hour with a fuel consumption per mou of 0.15 to 0.25 kilograms of oil. Presumably diesel oil, though not specified. The NATI tractor, a Soviet type, which is referred to later in the article as being in use, is a diesel-oil tractor. In 1951 the harvesting capacity of combines was 22 mou per hour with a fuel consumption of 0.73 kilograms per mou. This represents a reduction of 0.61 kilograms of fuel per mou as compared with 1950. (In the Soviet Union the same operation harvesting 24 mou per hour consumed 0.65 kilograms of fuel per mou.)

The goal of state farm management is to learn Soviet techniques. In 1951, the system of control was changed from a centralized official type to a production-unit type of organization involving individual responsibility. In the field of mechanization, a system of contracting to cover a certain field area with a certain machine or machines was adopted. In field management the system of area and plot responsibility was adopted. These changes form a basis for business-like management. Cadres in charge of state farms have discovered that in planning practical production programs the ideas of the workers must be solicited and used. Most state farms already have management committees (labor-management?) and labor unions embracing 85 percent of the laborers in their membership. Most of the unions have set up educational, propaganda, and welfare programs.

By 1951, most state farms had production and finance plans. Some have utilization efficiency plans. Machine farming groups and accounting departments nearly all have regular statisticians on the staff. The Lu-t'ai and the Machinery Training School farms both have daily reporting systems, field records, and labor statistics. All farms are using Ministry of Agriculture budget forms; this promotes more efficient knowledge of operations. Some farms have labor and machine utilization records.

Labor unions and democratic governing committees have increased the laborers' political knowledge and labor aggressiveness. Emulation programs in 1951 resulted in a number of new production records. For instance, seeder filling time was reduced from 15 to 18 minutes per filling to 2 to 3 minutes, a 500 to 800 percent increase in efficiency. The seeding rate was stepped up from 70.2 mou per hour to 89.16 mou using a NATI tractor drawing three seeders.

Numerous shortcomings and problems still to be eliminated includes the following:

- 3 -

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1. Problems of drainage, irrigation, alkali, and excessive weed growths remain to be overcome. Many cadres are not yet convinced of the value of a long-range program in these matters.
2. Cadres are still unfamiliar with this type of farming and unwilling to improve through study. The Lu-t'ai Farm met only 80 percent of its 1951 goal.
3. Cadres fail to recognize the value of the workers' advice and so fail to a considerable degree in rousing their zeal. Much waste is still prevalent. Cadres should proceed from the new techniques of deeper plowing, closer planting, and dry sowing of paddy rice to such techniques as grass-crop rotation. Improvement along all lines in the direction of socialization is required.

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- 4 -

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